

**E3 #1. 'Language contact is the most common reason for language change'. Discuss.**

Things you might like to think about in this essay:

Are there any other explanations for language change other than language contact? When should we favour contact as an explanation, or should we assume that all change is due to contact unless we have evidence to the contrary? What types of change can language contact explain, and do different types of contact explain different types of change?

Make sure you read at least one item from every section of the reading list.

**Contact-induced change:**

M. Ross (2003) 'Diagnosing prehistoric language contact' in Raymond Hickey (ed.),  
*Motives for Language Change*, 174-98.

G. Sankoff (2003) 'Linguistic outcomes of language contact' in J.K. Chambers et al. (eds.) *The Handbook of Language Variation and Change* (available online through Newton).

S. G. Thomason and T. Kaufman (1988) *Language Contact, Creolization, and Genetic Linguistics*.  
(Chapter 3. You may also like to look at Chapters 4 and 5 for more in-depth discussion and exemplification).

S. G. Thomason (2003) 'Contact as a source of language change' in B. D. Joseph & R. D. Janda (eds.), *The Handbook of Historical Linguistics*, 687-712.

**Other reasons for change:**

J. M. Anderson (1973) *Structural Aspects of Language Change* (Chapters 5 and 8).

J. J. Ohala (2003) 'Phonetics and historical phonology' in Brian D. Joseph & Richard D. Janda (eds.), *The Handbook of Historical Linguistics*, 669-86.

A. C. Harris and L. Campbell (1995) *Historical Syntax in Cross-Linguistic Perspective* (Chapter 4).

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**For examples from ancient languages:**

J. N. Adams (2003) *Bilingualism and the Latin Language* (Chapter 1)

E.W. Schneider (2003) 'Investigating variation and change in written documents' in J.K.

Chambers et al. (eds.) *The Handbook of Language Variation and Change* (available online through Newton).

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Please email your essay to me by 5pm on the day before the supervision. Please get in touch if you have any questions.